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2006 Montana Governor's Excellence in Exporting Award Winners Announced

(HELENA) – Today Lieutenant Governor John Bohlinger joined Steve Bixby, Chair of the Montana District Export Council, and members of the Montana District Export Council in honoring three statewide winners of the 2006 Governor's Excellence in Exporting Awards.

"The winners of the Governor's Excellence in Exporting Awards deserve to be recognized for their outstanding efforts in exporting Montana products," said Lt. Governor John Bohlinger "These innovative minds are working to put Montana on the map."

"Montana is known all around the world as a producer of high quality products," said Department of Commerce Director Anthony Preite. "Our 2005 Export sales increased by nearly 24 percent, totaling more than \$ 1 billion. Our numbers indicate 2006 Export sales could be even higher."

Recipients include:

- **Exporter of the Year – Trebro Manufacturing, Inc. – Billings**
- **Export Marketing Program – Liquid Engineering Corporation - Billings**
- **Export Advocate – Megan Harrington – Montana World Trade Center - Missoula**

Trebro Manufacturing, Inc. was honored as the 2006 Governor's Excellence in Exporting *Exporter of the Year* in recognition of the significant contributions it makes to the state and local economy by the export sale and marketing of its products. Trebro Manufacturing, Inc., which was originally founded in 1999, designs and manufactures innovative turf harvesting equipment for the turf (sod) industry. They are the world's largest manufacturer of sod harvest equipment and have developed a reputation throughout the industry as a leader in technology and innovation. Since 2002, company sales have increased in rather dramatic fashion, growing from virtually no sales - to over \$9,000,000 in export sales by year end 2005. Export sales are expected to reach over \$10,000,000 by year end 2006.

The *Export Marketing Program Award* winner, **Liquid Engineering Corporation**, was recognized for excellence and innovation in its efforts to develop and increase export sales. Liquid Engineering Corporation, founded in 1988, has evolved from the original potable water diving contractor into a specialty engineering support and consulting firm. Rather than export traditional goods, Liquid Engineering exports high value marine engineering services, offering a complete range of turn-key solutions, from assessment and repair, to complete design-build, for hundreds of projects across the country and abroad. For the past eight years, Liquid Engineering Corporation has grown at a remarkable rate of over 40 percent per year. Its list of clients – both domestically and internationally includes Fortune 100 companies, government agencies, and worldwide engineering firms.

The *Export Advocate Award* winner is **Megan Harrington** who was chosen for her outstanding achievements in assisting Montana companies in exporting their products and services worldwide. Harrington serves as the Project Manager for the Montana World Trade Center (MWTC) in Missoula and is the MWTC's primary liaison to member companies, overseeing work completed for all member accounts. Harrington has been the lead staff person in recruiting Montana companies to participate in trade missions to Europe and Asia. She also has the primary responsibility for coordinating travel arrangements and corporate meetings to ensure trade mission participants meet their goals for the mission, whether it is to assess particular market opportunities or meet potential distributors. Megan's export advocacy has proven effective in helping Montana companies successfully enter new international markets.

The Montana District Export Council (MDEC) is an organization of volunteer leaders from statewide businesses, education institutions, and government organizations. The combined knowledge of the council members in international business provides a source of professional advice on exporting to local firms and individuals. The MDEC is closely affiliated with the US Export Assistance Center and the Montana Department of Commerce. Through these partnerships, the MDEC provides export counseling, resource referrals, educational seminars, and associated literature. MDEC members can help firms in their local area plan for their first export sale, or further expand existing export programs.

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